



The Sunday of the Myrrh-bearing Women

About the beginning of His thirty-second year, when the Lord Jesus was going throughout Galilee, preaching and working miracles, many women who had received of His beneficence left their own homeland and from then on followed after Him. They ministered unto Him out of their own possessions, even until His crucifixion and entombment; and afterwards, neither losing faith in Him after His death, nor fearing the wrath of the Jewish rulers, they came to His sepulchre, bearing the myrrh-oils they had prepared to anoint His body. It is because of the myrrh-oils that these God-loving women brought to the tomb of Jesus that they are called Myrrh-bearers. Of those whose names are known are the following: first of all, the most holy Virgin Mary; who in Matthew 27:56 and Mark 15:40 is called “the mother of James and Joses” (these are the sons of Joseph by a previous marriage, and she was therefore their step-mother); Mary Magdalene (celebrated July 22); Mary the wife of Clopas; Joanna, wife of Chouza; a steward of Herod Antipas; Salome, the mother of the sons of Zebedee; Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus; and Susanna. As for the names of the rest of them, the evangelists have kept silence (Matt. 27:55-56; 28:1-10. Mark 15:40-41. Luke 8:1-3; 23:55-24:11, 22-24. John 19:25; 20:11-18. Acts 1:14).

Together with them we celebrate also the secret disciples of the Saviour, Joseph and Nicodemus. Of these, Nicodemus was probably a Jerusalemite, a prominent leader among the Jews and of the order of the Pharisees, learned in the Law and instructed in the Holy Scriptures. He had believed in Christ when, at beginning of our Saviour’s preaching of salvation, he came to Him by night. Furthermore, he brought some one hundred pounds of myrrh-oils and an aromatic mixture of aloes and spices out of reverence and love for the divine

Teacher (John 19:39). Joseph, who was from the city of Arimathea, was a wealthy and noble man, and one of the counselors who were in Jerusalem. He went boldly unto Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus, and together with Nicodemus he gave Him burial. Since time did not permit the preparation of another tomb, he placed the Lord's body in his own tomb which was hewn out of rock, as the Evangelist says (Matt. 27:60).

Dismissal Hymns. Second Tone

WHEN Thou didst descend unto death, O Life Immortal, then didst Thou slay Hades with the lightning of Thy Divinity. And when Thou didst also raise the dead out of the nethermost depths, all the powers in the heavens cried out: O Life-giver, Christ our God, glory be to Thee.

Glory.

THE noble Joseph, taking Thine immaculate Body down from the Tree, and having wrapped It in pure linen and spices, laid It for burial in a new tomb. But on the third day Thou didst arise, O Lord, granting great mercy to the world.

Both now.

UNTO the myrrh-bearing women did the Angel cry out as he stood by the grave: Myrrh-oils are meet for the dead, but Christ hath proved to be a stranger to corruption. But cry out: the Lord is risen, granting great mercy to the world.

Kontakion. Second Tone

WHEN Thou didst cry, Rejoice, unto the Myrrh-bearers, Thou didst make the lamentation of Eve the first mother to cease by Thy Resurrection, O Christ God. And Thou didst bid Thine Apostles to preach: The Saviour is risen from the grave.



OIKOS

AS the Myrrh-bearers went to Thy tomb, O Saviour, they were perplexed in mind and said to themselves: Who will roll the stone away from the sepulchre for us? And looking up, they saw that the stone was rolled away. They were awestruck by the form of the angel and his raiment. They were taken with trembling and thought to flee; and the youth cried unto them: Be not afraid; He Whom ye seek is risen; come, behold the place where the body of Jesus lay, and go quickly, proclaim unto the disciples: The Saviour is risen from the grave.

The Synaxarion of the Menaion, then the following:

On this day, the third Sunday of Pascha, we celebrate to feast of the Myrrh-bearing women. And we also make commemoration of Joseph of Arimathaea, who was a secret disciple, and also of Nicodemus, who was a disciple by night.

Verses

The women disciples bring myrrh unto Christ;
And I bring a hymn as it were myrrh unto them.
By the intercessions of the holy Myrrh-bearers,
O God, have mercy on us. Amen.



**†THE MOST HOLY †THEOTOKOS, THE FIRST TO SEE THE RISEN
CHRIST, AND HER COMPANIONS, THE MYRRH-BEARERS.**